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THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK ON THE PORTRAITS OF SHELLEY

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THE various engraved portraits of Shelley appear to have been based on a posthumous portrait painted by Clint, which was composed from one or more water-colour sketches by amateurs. They are all, including the painting by Clint, feeble productions, inaccurate in drawing and sentimental in expression. As to their veracity, the most competent authority, Thomas Love Peacock, the intimate friend and executor of the poet, writing in 1858 remarked: "These portraits do not impress themselves on me as likenesses. They seem to me to want the true outline of Shelley's features, and, above all, to want their true expression. There is a portrait in the Florence Gallery which represents him to me much more truthfully. It is that of Antonio Leisman, No. 155 of the '*Ritratti de' Pittori*,' in the Paris republication."—See '*Memoirs of Percy Bysshe Shelley*,' Fraser's Magazine, June, 1858.

The present print is a facsimile by a zinco-line process of the engraving by Lasinio of Leisman's portrait, reproduced from Peacock's copy of the '*Reale Galleria de Firenze Illustrata*,' Paris edition. It will be observed that Peacock expressly states that the likeness to Shelley was in the Paris republication of the '*Galleria di Firenze*'—the 'Florence Gallery' of the excerpt. He had never been in Italy, and consequently had not seen the picture. But it doubtless occurred to him that, although he found this striking likeness to his friend in the engraved outline, it might not be present in the finished picture. Such happens to be the case. For whilst the engraving is spirited and brilliant, the painting is cold and dry.

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Ant. Leisman dip. V. Gozzini dis. Lasinio figlio inc.

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